



Stockton Unified School District
Since 1852



Community Relations Department **TOOLKIT**



Communications Toolkit

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Guidelines for Written Communication

These guidelines are based on the Gregg Reference Manual, Tenth Edition and the Associated Press Style Guide.

Referencing the District

When referencing Stockton Unified School District, use the full title on the first mention. After the first reference, you may use District, capitalized as a proper noun, and you may use SUSD. Refer to other school districts as common nouns and do not capitalize “district” except at the beginning of a sentence.

When referencing schools, use the complete name of the school in the first mention. Subsequent references may use the short version of the names such as Fremont Elementary, Weber Tech, and JFHS.

Our elementary school names honor individuals; therefore, it is important to use the proper identifier to avoid confusion. Incorrect: Kate Mitchell will host its annual carnival tomorrow at 4 p.m. Correct: Mitchell Elementary [School] will host its annual carnival tomorrow at 4 p.m.

Referring to the School Board

The Stockton Unified School District Board of Trustees is an elected group of District residents who serve overlapping four -year terms. The directors serve at-large. On first reference, refer to this collective group as the Stockton Unified School District Board of Trustees. Capitalize Board as a proper noun on subsequent references in the same document. When referencing a list of directors without their position titles, list their names in alphabetical order according to their last names. When using directors’ names and titles, list their names in hierarchy, such as president, vice president, or director. When referring to a single director, include his or her name and position on the Board, capitalized as a proper noun. References to the directors as a group or without their names are common nouns not capitalized.

District Forms

Nearly all forms of District materials should be formatted business style. Materials prepared for creative expression, marketing, broadcast or press releases that require adherence to Associated Press style are the exceptions.

Formatting Business Letters

- Place the date under the letterhead, left justified.
- Skip four lines (4 hard returns).
- Type the full name of the recipient and include their title (Dr., Mr., Ms., Mrs., Miss).

- Follow with the recipient’s professional title on the next line (if there isn’t a title or affiliation, such as when writing to a parent, omit).
- Type the organization/affiliation on the next line.
- Place the street address, without using abbreviations, on the next line (include the suite or apartment number).
- Type the city, state, and zip code on the next line.
- Skip one line (2 hard returns).
- Place the salutation, personal title, last name, and a colon on the next line (always use title case).
- Skip one line (2 hard returns).
- Begin your letter, flush on the left side of the page using 1-inch margins with either 11 point or 12 point Arial, Calibri, or Times New Roman font. All letters are single spaced.
- Leave one blank line between paragraphs (2 hard returns). Do not indent paragraphs and do not use full justification.
- Skip one line (2 hard returns).
- Use a complimentary closing (Sincerely, Best regards, Thank you [always use sentence case]).
- Skip three lines (4 hard returns) to allow for the writer’s signature.
- Type the writer’s/signatory’s name.
- Place the writer’s/signatory’s professional title on the line below his or her name.
- Skip one line (2 hard returns) and choose from the following based on the situation that applies:
 - Enclosure notation for attached documents
 - Include the District’s website, <https://www.stocktonusd.net>, on all printed and written materials, without the underline, unless the underline is created by a hyperlink

Punctuation and Grammar

Using correct basic grammar improves clarity in communication. Please review these basic guidelines.

Punctuation

Punctuation guides readers through sentences. Before sending any document or publication, check punctuation and make corrections when needed.

Capitalization

Capitalize:

- The beginning of a sentence
- Proper nouns, which include names of people, titles, geographical locations, organizations, historical events, special events, awards, brand names, class names, ethnic

groups, cultures, languages, months, days of the week, holidays, religions, acts, laws, bills, treaties, cities and states, and Web references.

- Official titles of honor and respect when they precede personal names (Mr., Mrs., Dr., Governor, President, Superintendent, Reverend, etc.).
- The words “Internet” and “Web”
- Don’t capitalize:
- Official titles when the personal name that follows is set off by commas. (The Vice President, Harry Foreman, will address the club at noon.)
- Occupational titles (lawyer, teacher, student, secretary, doctor, etc.) when they precede personal names.
- Beware of words that are capitalized when used as a proper noun or title but are not capitalized when used as a common noun.

Examples:

- Professor Clark works at California State University Stanislaus.
- He is a professor at the University of the Pacific.
- Enter the parking lot from the south side of the building.
- Enter the parking lot located on South Pearl Street.
- Every winter our students host a talent show.
- The talent show will be held this year just before Winter Break.
- Allison is in Grade 6.
- Daniel is a sixth-grade student.
- He attends a 5-Star School.
- The school earned four stars this year.

Commas

Use commas:

- To separate elements within a sentence while showing the relationship between those elements
- To set off secondary elements of a sentence that interrupt the flow of thought between them
- In a series of three or more items, before the word “and”.
 - Example: Pablo, Marlon, Tyronne, Jose, and Salina are in the library preparing for the proficiency exam.
- After introductory elements such as words, prepositional phrases, infinitive phrases, participial phrases, or adverb clauses that begin a sentence and come before the subject and verb of the main clause
 - Examples:
 - Prepositional phrase: In a courteous fashion, please greet families as they enter the school office Area

- Infinitive phrase: To succeed in this field, you must be willing to risk having your work critiqued regularly.
 - Participial phrase: Driving past the school, we saw six children doing cartwheels on the lawn.
 - Adverb clause: Because he had to stay late to finish the job last night, Jashon is leaving at 2 p.m. today.
 - Other introductory elements:
 - Yes, I will make certain your request for payment is processed today.
 - In addition, we will include the results of the testing in the school newsletter this April.
- Between two independent (main) clauses that are joined by a coordinating conjunction (and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so):
 - Examples:
 - Our custodian will start stripping the floor this afternoon at 4 p.m., and the Operations crew will join him around 6 p.m.
 - The principal thinks he will hold the award ceremony at 3 p.m. when his meeting ends, or if the meeting ends sooner, he will announce an earlier time.
 - Ester will not be eligible to play football this fall, so he will not be included on the roster.
- Between adjectives of equal rank when the adjectives modify the same noun:
 - Examples:
 - The drawing was of a modern, sleek, metal framed desk.
 - We began the day with a notable, stunning rendition of the “Star Spangled Banner.”
- To set off direct quotations from words that precede or follow the quote:
 - Example:
 - “Students in the orchestra class earned gold star status for their rendition of ‘America the Beautiful,’” Mr. Foster said.
- To set off words that interrupt the flow of thought. These are called parenthetical expressions and are items that are not essential to the meaning of the sentence:
 - Examples:
 - The accounting department, working quickly and efficiently, processed the payment three weeks prior to the deadline.
 - Human Resources, which is ISO certified, earned the Gold Standard award for processing applications.
- After a noun used as a direct address or a nonessential appositive:
 - Examples:
 - Mark, you are responsible for getting the newsletters in the mail today.
 - Our school librarian, Mr. Forsyth, will hold a silent auction at 10 a.m. today.

- When introducing examples with the words such as, especially, and particularly, and also with expressions that contrast or confirm:
 - Examples:
 - References, such as area service centers, divisions, and departments, must include the full name of the location on the first reference in all formal correspondence.
 - The department chairs have all done their part to promote good Socratic note taking, especially Mr. Manyivong.
- After the complimentary closing of your correspondence:
 - Examples:
 - Sincerely,
 - Best regards,
- To set off dates and addresses in correspondence:
 - Examples:
 - Sixth Grade award ceremonies begin June 4, 2020, at 9 a.m.
 - The Edward A. Greer Education Center is located at 3333 East Martin Luther King Street, Stockton, California, 33333
- After the words first, second, third, etc. when used to begin a clause that attempts to establish chronological order:
 - Examples:
 - First, ask Dr. Melbourn to clear the area.
 - Second, the floor needs to be cleaned.
- To separate two contrasting thoughts or ideas:
 - Examples:
 - The gymnasium mural was finished on time, but not within the budget.
 - Maria was responsible for creating the program, Harry destroyed it.
 - Tyrone changed her classes, not her major, last week.

In recent years, the use of a comma to set off Jr., Sr., or a Roman numeral following a person's name has changed, eliminating the comma between the name and the designation. The same is true when using similar terms, such as Inc. and Ltd. in a corporate name. Examples of correct usage:

- Michael Davis Jr. Jose Mercado- Garcia III

Colons

Use only one space after a colon.

Use colons:

- To introduce long quotations
 - Example:

- The following post to teacherlingo.com is relevant to your question and was written by someone who calls herself a student advocate: “According to experts, a way to cope with teacher burnout is to continue professional engagement, read inspiring literature, and be proactive in learning new methods and conventional development in your craft.”
- After the greeting in a business letter
 - Example:
 - Dear Mr. Vazari:
- After guide words in a memo or similar communication, such as Date: To: From: Subject:
- Between two independent clauses when the second clause explains or clarifies the first.
 - Example:
 - Department directors serve two primary functions: they represent the administration to the department, and at the same time, they communicate the needs of the department to the administration.
- After a complete sentence to introduce a list of items:
 - Example:
 - Students, ages 5 through 12, who are attending one of the following schools, will be eligible to participate: Edwards, Fellows, Meeker, Mitchell, and Sawyer.
- Don’t place a colon between a verb and its object or a preposition and its object.
 - Example of incorrect colon usage:
 - The three students participating in the program are: Sherry, Donelda, and Barry.
 - Example of correct colon usage:
 - These are the students chosen to participate in the program: Ashley, Donisha and Benjamin.
- Don’t place a colon between a preposition and its object.
 - Example of incorrect colon usage: I would like to be transferred to: Food Service, Transportation, or Technology Resources.
 - Example of correct punctuation: I would like to be transferred to Food Service, Transportation or Technology Resources.

Dashes

en dash (–), *keystroke tab alt* -

Use the en dash

- To connect things that are related to each other by distance or to specify any kind of range,
 - Example: in an index when a range of pages is cited (e.g., 147–48).
- To connect a prefix to a proper open compound:
 - Example, pre–World War II. In that example, “pre” is connected to the open compound “World War II”.

em dash (—) keystroke shift alt -

Use an em dash (—) in a manner similar to parentheses:

- To add an additional thought within a sentence—like this one.
- Use multiple em dashes as a substitute for something missing.
 - Examples:
 - In a bibliographic list, rather than repeating the same author over and over again, three consecutive em dashes (also known as a 3-em dash) stand in for the author’s name.
 - In interrupted dialogue, two em dashes may be used: “I wasn’t trying to imply——” “Then just what were you trying to do?”

Hyphen

Use a hyphen to connect two things that are intimately related, usually words that function together as a single concept or work together as a joint modifier (e.g., tie in, toll free call, two-thirds).

Exclamation point

Limit the use of exclamation points in business writing.

Italics

Use italics

- To identify titles of literary and artistic works unless using Associated Press style for a press release.
 - Example: Mrs. Arthur’s class will begin studying Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* next week.
- To identify foreign expressions that are not considered a part of the English language.
 - Example: *Chaos* seems to be the *raison d’ être* for the committee.
- Use Italics sparingly to add special emphasis to words or phrases,
 - Example: I wanted the *royal blue* background, not the *navy blue* background.

Abbreviations

- In business writing, use abbreviations only when necessary. Abbreviations common in business communication include Dr., Mr., Ms., Ph.D., a.m., and p.m.
- Do not abbreviate as AM or PM or am or pm

Acronyms

- Use acronyms in the Ames Community School District approved for internal communication. See Google Doc.
 - Examples: APR, AYP, FAST

- In communication to external audiences, use acronyms on second reference for organizations with long names and for organizations whose acronyms are familiar to audiences.
 - Example: Youth & Shelter Services Inc. (YSS), first reference. Second reference: YSS.

Parentheses

Use parentheses

- To set off information related to the sentence that is incidental information or a comment. Just like dashes and quotation marks, parentheses should seldom be used in business writing. Their purpose is to minimize the interruption in thought or indicate a parenthetical reference.
 - Example: If you will provide me with your input Monday (sooner if possible), I will have the letter for your review by Tuesday.
- To introduce an acronym that will be used in further references
 - Example:
 - As a volunteer in the Professionals And Youth Building A Commitment (PAYBAC) program, you will share with middle school students the message to continue their education, set goals, and plan for the future.

Periods

Use a period

- At the end of a sentence that makes a statement or expresses a command.
- To mark the end of an elliptical expression, such as Yes. No. No problem. Been there. Done that.
- To mark the end of a rhetorical or indirect question, such as “Katlin, would you please answer the phone.”
- To indicate an abbreviation, such as Mrs., Mr., Dr., Assn.
- To separate a whole number from a decimal fraction, such as \$7.05, 9.25%, 0.001.
- To specify numerals and letters in outlines, these are: I., II., III., IV., V., A., B., C., i., ii., iii.

Do not use a period:

- In headings (the exception is after a run in heading, which is a heading that begins a paragraph, not a freestanding heading displayed on a line by itself).
- After Roman numerals used in a sentence.
- Don’t add a space when using the period to indicate a decimal. In all other circumstances, add one one space after a period.

Numbers

- Spell out numbers from zero through nine and use numerals for all numbers 10 and above.
 - Exceptions and examples:
 - Use numerals in tables to relay information

- Use all figures for communicating statistical material, date (June 14, 2010), money (\$6.50), proportions and ratios (8:12), time (3:12 p.m.), scores of sporting events (21 to 3), decisions made by vote (a 3-4 decision), academic grades (82 percent), percentages (98 percent), temperature
 - (101 degrees), measurement (18 cm, 3 pounds, 10 ounces), and page numbers (page 1).
 - Use rounded amounts, as necessary, when describing large amounts of money. This technique combines numerals and words, such as \$20 million or \$5.6 billion.
- Use the full spelling of every numeral when it begins a sentence.
 - Write time as 8 a.m., 8:30 a.m., 12 noon or 12 p.m.; 3:10 p.m., 6:23 p.m., 12 midnight or 12 a.m.

NOTE: The standard is lowercase “a” or “p” followed by a period, followed by the lowercase “m” and a final period as punctuation, not AM or PM. List an event’s time using a hyphen and no extra spaces. Example: April 1, 2012, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Alternative: We are open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

- Spell out ordinal numbers: first, second, third unless the numeral is part of a title or street name, such as the 50th Anniversary Celebration or 1005 S.W. 10th Street.
 - Examples of how to write numbers:
 - When all is said and done, Zarah’s options for next term are zero.
 - The check was written for \$2,852, but the school was billed for \$2,857.50.
 - Jeannie wants to drop her fourth period class.
 - Twenty-four students will participate in Mr. Pullman’s history contest this year.
 - The grant awarded to the District is just over \$400,000.
- Do not abbreviate years: we write the numerals.
 - Examples: 1956, 1999, 2001, 2012, etc. For fiscal years and school terms, it is acceptable to use this form: 2014-15.

Grammar

Here is a summary of important grammar rules:

- Pronouns as antecedents. Pronouns function as substitutes for nouns.
 - Use the singular pronoun “it” for collective nouns such as staff, team, Board, District and when referencing an animal, object, or place.
 - Examples:
 - The school staff is prepared to share its report next Tuesday.
 - The department was awarded \$10,000 based on its work to create an efficient and innovative strategic plan.

- The dog ran through the school stopping only to bark at its reflection in the window.
 - Use “who” to reference people.
 - Example: Students who arrive early should wait in the vestibule.
 - Use “that” and “which” when referencing an animal, object, or place.
 - Examples
 - T Shirts are expenses that should not be paid from student activity funds.
 - Bill’s report on legislative expenses, which included all reporting requirements, should assist you in making a final decision. (Note: always use a comma after “which.”)

Question Mark

Use a question mark

- To let the reader know there is a question that requires a response.
- To indicate an expression of doubt or uncertainty
 - Examples:
 - Does the meeting really begin at 2 a.m?
 - The donuts in the lounge were provided by the PTA, no?

Quotation Marks

Use Quotation marks

- To indicate the use of someone else’s exact words
 - Example:
 - Jacks Tomlinson, a fifth--grader at Henry School, said he likes Winter Break. “My family has a read-a-thon and last year, I read six books in two weeks,” he said.
- When referencing excerpts from another publication, literary, artistic, or academic works such as chapters, lectures, lessons, topics, sections, titles, and parts within a book, plus segments or programs that are part of a television or radio series, and songs.
 - Examples:
 - Dr. Jones' lesson, “Motivating Students in Homeroom,” will be published next month.
 - The orchestra will perform Beethoven’s “Moonlight Sonata” during its spring concert.
- To indicate an unusual or colloquial use of words.
 - Example:” Carol’s “can-do” attitude is impressive.

Semicolon

Use semicolons

- To link independent clauses or other sentence elements of equal weight, but provide a greater pause than a comma.
 - Example:
 - We appreciate good employees who challenge each other to work hard every day; we thank them.
- To join the parts of a compound sentence when replacing a coordinating conjunction such as, and, but, or, nor, for, yet, so
 - Examples:
 - Janet Rogers will facilitate the in-service tomorrow at 7 a.m.; Bob. Rogers will serve refreshments.
 - The consequences for failing to follow the club’s guidelines include losing privileges for five days; you may also choose to write an apology.
- Between independent clauses joined by a conjunctive adverb such as therefore, however, nevertheless, thus, moreover, also, besides, consequently, meanwhile, otherwise, then, furthermore, likewise, in fact, still.
 - Example. The Science Olympiad team’s plane was delayed overnight; however, the airline provided vouchers for lodging.

Sentence Structure

Structuring your thoughts and ideas in a logical order according to basic English language rules helps readers understand the purpose and tone of your writing.

- Make every sentence complete, using a subject and a verb that agree in number and tense.
- Use active voice whenever possible.
 - For example, instead of writing, “The sack lunches were eaten by the students before the early dismissal, write, “Students ate sack lunches before the early dismissal.”
- If the object of the verb is the point of the sentence, you may use passive voice.
 - For example it would be correct to write, “The letters were mailed to each household to make sure families received them before winter break.” However, you could avoid passive voice by writing, “To make sure families received the letters before winter break, staff in the Business Office mailed them to each household Thursday.”

As you create your work and proofread your colleague’s work, be sure to correct:

- Run--on sentences
- Sentence fragments
- Multiple negatives
- Incorrect pronoun references
- Use of unidentified abbreviations and acronyms
- Jargon or clichés
- Inaccurate word choices

Visual Standards Guides

Brand Identity

Stockton Unified School District's mission frames its identity for all audiences. The District's visual and written communications are designed to evoke the essence of its mission and vision to meet the needs of all students to ensure they are lifelong learners who are college, career, and community ready.

These style guidelines for written and visual communication set standards for clarity, accuracy and consistency and establish a platform for creating dynamic messages that advance our mission.

Logo Usage

The Stockton Unified School District logos are a very important part of the district's identity. The district owns and controls its name, logos, insignias, and seals, and they are strictly for district use only. Developing a common and consistent visual identity is an essential step in reinforcing our image for our students, families, employees and community. Therefore, it is important that all communications from Stockton Unified School District and our schools follow these guidelines.

The official SUSD logo must appear on all printed materials-such as programs and posters-produced by the district for concerts, performances, expos, showcases, band reviews, etc. The logos and all text must be in compliance with the district graphic standards and be approved by the Community Relations Department.

Purpose of Graphic Standards

As a district of individual schools, we must be consistent in the use of our logo for all materials we produce. The school, department and district logos should be applied following the guidelines below in order to project a more unified and stronger visual image to the community and to better reflect SUSD's educational mission.

Guidelines For Logo Use:

The image resolution should reflect the same quality as the original file and not be a copy of a copy. The logo must retain the original and official logo colors in any re-printing. If the logo is resized, it must retain its original properties. If additional text is added near the logo, it must not appear to be part of the logo. The logos may not be rotated or flipped in any way. Do not rearrange the symbol and logotype relationships.

By using and/or reproducing any logos associated with Stockton Unified School District, you are acknowledging that you have read and are willing to comply with Stockton Unified School District's policy regarding all logos guidelines.

If you have any questions regarding the application of any of the logos, please contact the Community Relations Department at (209) 933-7025.

Color Palette Standards

Stockton Unified School District logo colors are as follows:

Orange: 

Hex: #FF8500

RGB: 255, 133, 0

CMYK: 0%, 48%, 100%, 0%

Blue: 

Hex: #000bab

RGB: 0, 11, 171

CMYK: 100%, 95%, 23%, 13%

Working with the Media

The media is your friend, really! The media are a resource for you to reach members of the community. Relationships with the media help facilitate stories, in good times and bad. Reporters are just like anyone else- they have a job and they must report the story- so be their partner and help them report the real story.

If the media calls, immediately take their contact information (including name, phone number, and media outlet) and refer them to the SUSD Community Relations Department to schedule any interviews or to receive information.

Only those authorized by the Community Relations Department or the Superintendent can speak to the media on behalf of the school or the District.

Here are some quick interview tips to follow if authorized:

Interview Tips

- **Know Your Single Overriding Communication Objective (SOCO):** What is the ONE message you want the audience to take away from this interview/report? THAT is your SOCO. The single overriding communication objective (SOCO) is the main message to your target audience, by which you would like to achieve your communication aim. A good SOCO should be objective, concise and precise.
 - Sample: “Student and staff safety is our top priority.”
 - Sample: “ We want all Stockton Unified students to graduate college, career, and community ready.”
- **Work Your SOCO Into Every Response:** Do your best to work your message in when responding to a reporter’s questions, especially the questions you cannot answer. You may feel like you are repeating yourself, but you’re really just increasing your chance of having them air your SOCO since they’ll only be airing one or two of your sentences. Here are some transition phrases to help you work your SOCO into your response-
 - I can’t comment on that, but what I can say is...
 - What’s important to remember, however...
 - That’s not my area of expertise, but what I can tell you is...
 - Let me just add...
 - That’s a good point, but I think you’d be interested in knowing that...
 - What that means is...
 - While ____ is certainly important, don’t forget that.....

- **Write It Out:** Prepare your statement BEFORE you get on camera. Write out the releasable details (who, what, when, where, and how). Reread them to ensure no personal student or staff information is included
- **Take Your Time:** Unless the interview is LIVE, you are allowed to take a few seconds before responding to the interview question. Any pauses will be edited out. Do not feel rushed into a response, even if your reporter is asking with a rapid-fire style.
- **Pay Attention To Delivery:** Ensure your tone matches the topic. Avoid distracting mannerisms, such as rocking, overuse of hand gestures or stoic appearance. Again, be aware of the language you are using to ensure it is culturally competent.
- **Don't Be a Hero:** If you don't know the answer to a question, do not speculate or guess. Instead, say that you don't have the answer, but you will find out and get back to the reporter. Be sure to follow through with that information.

Remember

- **Nothing is ever “off the record”.**
- **Students CAN speak with the media**, as is their first amendment right. Best practice is to notify the parents so they can anticipate their child may be speaking with news media on a controversial or sensitive topic. Students are not allowed to miss instructional time or create a disruption to the school environment to give an interview. Unless arranged by the school or District, student interviews should be done after school hours on non-school property.
- **With the exception of the Stockton Record, media must sign up at the front desk.** District policy is to ask ALL visitors to our campuses to sign-in. At SUSD we ask reporters and photographers from The Record to identify themselves, but we do not require that they sign in. All other media must sign in.
- **Media cannot disrupt the learning process.** While the law generally allows media to be on a school campus just as we would allow a parent or a community partner to be on campus, media cannot pose a disruption to the learning environment at a school. Any media that will be on campus must be cleared beforehand. If a reporter is on campus, he/she should be escorted by a school or District employee at all times.
- **If a family has opted their student out of photos, alert any media who visit for photos or video.**

Website Policy

The purpose of district-sponsored websites is to: (1) make families, students, and the community aware of school, classroom, and student activities, and (2) foster communication among those groups. To this end, all district websites must include the information outlined in the following section.

Design Standards

The Superintendent or designee shall develop design standards for district and school websites that include, but are not limited to, guidelines to ensure the clear organization of the material, readability of the font type and size, and simplicity of the navigation structure linking the content on the web site. Such standards shall take into consideration the ease of use on a wide range of devices.

In accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, district and school websites shall contain features that ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities, which may include, but are not limited to, captions for videos and multimedia presentations, text alternatives to images, provision of sufficient time to use the content, avoidance of flashing images, adequate contrast in visual presentations, the descending use of headers, and/or other features that meet applicable standards for web site accessibility. The Superintendent or designee shall regularly review district and school web sites and modify them as needed to ensure legal compliance with accessibility standards.

(cf. [0410](#) - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

Website Content

As applicable, district and school websites shall provide current information regarding the district's mission and goals, district/school programs and operations, district/school news, agendas and minutes of Board of Education meetings, School Accountability Report Cards, school calendars, and links to educational resources.

(cf. [0440](#) - District Technology Plan)

(cf. [0510](#) - School Accountability Report Card)

(cf. [1100](#) - Communication with the Public)

(cf. [9322](#) - Agenda/Meeting Materials)

With approval of the principal, individual teachers may create web pages linked to the district or school web site to provide information pertaining to class assignments, expectations, and activities.

Student work may be published on district or school web sites provided that both the student and his/her parent/guardian provide written permission or the work is part of an existing publication such as a school newspaper.

Any copyrighted material to be posted on a district or school website shall be submitted to the Webmaster or designee together with the permission of the copyright owner to reprint the material. Any copyrighted material submitted without the copyright owner's permission shall only be posted on a district or school website if the Superintendent or designee determines that the material is in the public domain or that the intended use meets the criteria for fair use or another exception pursuant to 17 USC [107-122](#). When any copyrighted material is posted, the website shall include a notice crediting the copyright owner and, as necessary, shall note that permission to reprint the material was granted.

(cf. 4132/4232/4332 - Publication or Creation of Materials)

(cf. 6162.6 - Use of Copyrighted Materials)

All subject matter on web pages must relate to curriculum, instruction, school activities, social media, or general information that is relevant and in line with the district goals and objectives. Web pages for individuals or organizations not directly affiliated with the district are not allowed.

Student work should be published when it relates to a class project, course, or other school-related activity. No personal information, such as home phone numbers and addresses, can be included for any student. Schools, however, must provide staff email addresses on teacher pages as a convenient means of communication for their website visitors.

Links in web pages that reference sites not associated with SUSD are prohibited. Links to business partners or curriculum-related sites may be used if approved by the principal.

The district reserves the right, without notice, to remove any link that references a website deemed inappropriate or contrary to district policies.

Stockton Unified School District (SUSD) is committed to providing information through its website to all members of the public, including those with disabilities by keeping the website both accessible and ADA compliant.

Website Supervision

Principals and the school website editor(s) are responsible for their school and teacher websites. Due to the dynamic nature of the web, it is not feasible for principals to pre-approve every alteration or addition to the school website. However, principals should make it a routine practice

to browse all website pages. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure the websites follow all policies and procedures of SUSD and that the school and teacher web pages are complete, current in content and fully functional.

The district reserves the right to remove any web pages deemed inappropriate or contrary to district policies. If a web page has been removed, the author will be contacted and informed. We reserve the right to suspend, revoke or disqualify editing rights to anyone. If editing rights are removed they can be reinstated through proper training from the District Webmaster.

Questions or Concern, please contact:

Webmaster Justin Swenson at (209) 933-7035 extension 2063 or by email at jswenson@stocktonusd.net.

FOR SCHOOLS	FOR TEACHERS (Teacher Pages)
<p>Required</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contact information (including email addresses) for the school, and principal. ● The school's mission and vision. ● School year calendar that includes all significant school events. 	<p>Recommended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● "About the Teacher" information, which includes contact information ● Syllabus ● Assignments Page (weekly or daily) ● Calendar of Events ● Class work ● Links to educational resources
<p>Recommended</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Extra-curricular activities sponsored by the school. ● Student work, activities, and achievements highlighted as a homepage story. ● Newsletter or school newspaper. ● Other information deemed appropriate by the Principal. 	

Social Media Policy

Authorization for Official District Social Media Platforms

The Superintendent or designee shall authorize the development of any official district social media platform. Teachers and coaches shall obtain approval from the principal before creating an official classroom or team social media platform.

Guidelines for Content

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that official district social media platforms provide current information regarding district programs, activities, and operations, consistent with the goals and purposes of this policy and regulation. Official district social media platforms shall contain content that is appropriate for all audiences.

- (cf. [0440](#) - District Technology Plan)
- (cf. [0510](#) - School Accountability Report Card)
- (cf. [1100](#) - Communication with the Public)
- (cf. [1112](#) - Media Relations)
- (cf. [1113](#) - District and School Web Sites)
- (cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)
- (cf. 6145.5 - Student Organization and Equal Access)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that copyright laws are not violated in the use of material on official district social media platforms.

- (cf. 4132/4232/4332 - Publication or Creation of Materials)
- (cf. 6162.6 - Use of Copyrighted Materials)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that official district social media platforms are regularly monitored. Staff members responsible for monitoring content may remove posts based on viewpoint-neutral considerations, such as lack of relation to the site's purpose or violation of the district's policy, regulation, or content guidelines.

Each official district social media platform shall prominently display:

1. The purpose of the site along with a statement that users are expected to use the site only for those intended purposes.
2. Information on how to use the security settings of the social media platform.
3. A statement that the site is regularly monitored and that any inappropriate post will be promptly removed. Inappropriate posts include those that:
 - a. Are obscene, libelous, or so incite students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, violation of school rules, or substantial disruption of the school's orderly operation

- b. Are not related to the stated purpose of the site, including, but not limited to, comments of a commercial nature, political activity, and comments that constitute discrimination or harassment

(cf. [0410](#) - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

(cf. [1160](#) - Political Processes)

(cf. [1325](#) - Advertising and Promotion)

4. Protocols for users, including expectations that users will communicate in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner.
5. A statement that users are personally responsible for the content of their posts and that the district is not responsible for the content of external online platforms.
6. A disclaimer that the views and comments expressed on the site are those of the users and do not necessarily reflect the views of the district.
7. A disclaimer that any user's reference to a specific commercial product or service does not imply endorsement or recommendation of that product or service by the district.
8. The individual(s) to contact regarding violation of district guidelines on the use of official district social media platforms.

District employees who participate in official district social media platforms shall adhere to all applicable district policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, professional standards related to interactions with students.

(cf. 4040 - Employee Use of Technology)

(cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)

When appropriate, employees using official district social media platforms shall identify themselves by name and district title and include a disclaimer stating that the views and opinions expressed in their post are theirs alone and do not necessarily represent those of the district or school.

All staff shall receive information about appropriate use of the official district social media platforms.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Crisis Communication Templates

When a critical situation arises, school administrators must provide a rapid, but thoughtful response. As part of your school's Emergency Response Plan, prepare skeleton letters in advance to communicate with the school community.

These letters should convey essential, concise, and immediate information to the affected audiences. Depending on the situation, the letters should be directed to students, staff, families, and the community.

In this section, you'll find sample letters drawn from school district files around the country. They cover a broad spectrum of crises. Use them as a template for your school or make changes tailored to your school community.

When preparing communication, keep in mind the essential components for a good crisis response letter. In addition to providing specific details of the event, the letter should:

- Reassure families.
- Keep the information simple and straightforward.
- Reiterate the school's position on the issue.
- Convey a sense of stability and partnership in dealing with the situation.
- Provide ways for families to talk to their children.

Death of a Student

Sample Death of a Student Letter #1

The faculty and staff of (*name of school*) regret to inform you that on (*date*), a tragic event occurred on our campus resulting in the death of (*name of student*), one of our (*grade level*) graders. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family.

Today in class, the teachers and (*Crisis Response Team, counselors*) talked with the students about (*name of student*) and their feelings. Please be sensitive to any changes in your child's behavior. Over the next few days, encourage your child to express his or her feelings and listen attentively.

It will be helpful to recognize the various steps we all go through in the grieving process: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. Some of the common reactions that children experience when reacting to a traumatic event are:

- Restlessness, nervous behavior
- Trouble concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping, nightmares
- “Clingy” behavior, fear of being alone
- Asking questions over and over again
- Remembering previous losses and events

If you have any concerns about your child's reactions to this loss, feel free to contact your child's teacher, the school counselors, or the administrative staff.

Thank you for your concern at this difficult time.

Sample Death of a Student Letter #2

It is with deep sorrow that we are reporting the death of (*name of student*), one of our (*grade level*), who was hit by a vehicle yesterday morning. (*First name of student*) succumbed to (his or her) injuries last evening.

Our thoughts and prayers are with (*first name of student*) and (*his or her*) family during this difficult time. We also offer condolences to all the (*name of school*) students and staff members, especially (*his or her*) classmates, teachers and support staff.

If you have any concerns about your child's reactions to this loss, feel free to contact your child's teacher, the school counselors, or the administrative staff. Thank you for your concern and well wishes.

Sample Death of a Student Letter #3

We were saddened to learn of the death of (*name of student*), a classmate of your child, and we extend our heartfelt sympathy to (*his or her*) family. Many children have been affected by this news. We encourage you to be especially sensitive and prepared to offer support to your child during this time.

Your child's class has been informed of this loss. Over the next few days, encourage your child to express his or her own feelings. And listen attentively. You may see behavior changes, loss of concentration, physical complaints, or regression.

If you have any concerns about your child's reaction to this loss, contact your child's teacher, the school counselors, or administrative staff.

Sample Death of a Student Letter #4

As you may know, our school community experienced a death this week. (*Name of student*) died as a result of (*vehicle accident, serious illness, unexpectedly, etc.*) Our school will provide an opportunity for students and staff to discuss and work through issues related to the crisis and grief process.

Your child will have the option to participate in group or individual counseling provided by members of the school Crisis Response Team (*and the district's Critical Incident Team*). Participation in these activities is voluntary. Staff will continue to be available as needed to help students deal with their grief.

Please pay particular attention to your child's emotional needs during the next few weeks, especially if he or she was close to the deceased.

- Encourage your child to talk with you about the feelings he or she is experiencing concerning the death. Judiciously sharing similar experiences that you have had may be very useful. Make yourself available to talk about the death and to answer questions.
 - Be aware that your children may not feel like themselves for a while. Talk about ways to feel better.
 - Initiate a discussion of the death with your child. Research shows that this helps the healing process.
 - It is strongly recommended that you accompany your child to the funeral or memorial service, if you judge that this is necessary.
 - Watch for ongoing signs of difficulty, which may indicate that your child may need additional help. Possible signs are prolonged sadness, withdrawal from social contact, changes in eating or sleeping habits, or other behaviors unusual for your child.
- If you need assistance, please contact the school. Our counselors can provide a list of school community resources.

Sample Death of a Student Letter #5

We at (*name of school*) are saddened by the death of (*name of student*). (*Student name*) was a student in (*classroom teacher's name and grade*).

Counselors visited the classrooms today to help our students cope with this sad news. These are the topics counselors and teachers discussed with students:

- **What we know to be true:** We have talked with the children about rumors and we have told the students the facts as we know them. It is important not to generate stories.
- **Feelings:** We reinforced that all feelings are appropriate. Many children are feeling sad and mad at the loss of their friend and schoolmate. Children may also feel scared that this could happen to them. All of these feelings are normal. It is important for us to explore these feelings and to accept them.
Nightmares are a common occurrence and may be a result of things children have seen or heard. Reassure your child of your love and comfort them.
- **What is death?** Children have a difficult time understanding the concept of death. They need to know that death is part of life. Your personal beliefs can help clarify this confusing concept.
- **Commemoration:** Some students expressed interest in sending cards to the student's family. This can be an important part of the grieving process and is encouraged for those students who wish to do so. Children are advised to discuss ways to remember a person who has died, with their families.

In an effort to further assist you in helping your child during this difficult period, we have prepared the attached list of guidelines. If you have any questions or concerns, please call the school counselor's office to speak with (*counselor's name*) at (*phone number*).

Death by Suicide

Sample Death by Suicide Letter #1

The faculty and staff of (*name of school*) are deeply saddened to learn of the reported suicide of (*name of student*), one of our (*grade level*) grade students. We encourage you to be especially sensitive and prepared to offer support to your child during this time.

We have asked (*counselors, teachers, Crisis Response Team*) to help our school community deal with this loss. We are doing everything that we can to help your child and our staff through this tragic experience. Over the next few days, encourage your child to express (*his or her*) feelings and listen attentively.

It will be helpful to recognize the various steps that we all go through in the grieving process: denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance. We have enclosed a handout on the warning signs of suicide for your information.

You may also want to contact the (*local crisis center and hotline*) if your family has any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your concern and support during this difficult time.

Sample Death by Suicide Letter #2

I am writing with great sadness to inform you that one of our students, (*name of student*), has died. Our thoughts and sympathies are with (*his or her*) family and friends.

All of the students were given the news of the death by their teacher in (*advisory/homeroom*) this morning. I have included a copy of the announcement that was read to them.

The cause of death was suicide. We want to take this opportunity to remind our community that suicide is a very complicated act. We do not know all the causes or motivations for a suicide. One thing is certain: there are treatments that can help. Suicide should never, ever be an option. I am including some information that may be helpful to you in discussing suicide with your child.

Members of our Crisis Response Team are available to meet with students individually and in groups today and in the coming days and weeks. Please contact the school office if you feel your child is in need of additional assistance; we also have a list of school and community mental health resources.

Information about the funeral service will be made available as soon as we have it. If your child wishes to attend, we strongly encourage you to accompany him or her to the service. If the funeral is scheduled during school hours, students who wish to attend will need parental permission to be released from school.

The school will be hosting a meeting for families and others in the community at (*date/time/location*). Members of our Crisis Response Team (*or mental health professionals*) will be present to provide information about common reactions following a suicide and how adults can help youths cope. They will also provide information about suicide and mental illness in adolescents, including risk factors and warning signs of suicide, and will address attendees' questions and concerns.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or one of our school counselors with questions or concerns.

Sample Death by Suicide Letter #3

I am writing with great sadness to inform you that one of our students, (*name of student*) has died. Our thoughts and sympathies are with (*his or her*) family and friends.

All of the students were given the news of the death by their teacher in (*advisory/homeroom*) this morning. I have included a copy of the announcement that was read to them.

Authorities have not determined the cause of death. We are aware there has been some talk about the possibility that this was a suicide death. Rumors may begin to circulate, and we ask that you not spread rumors since they may turn out to be inaccurate and can be deeply hurtful and unfair to (*name of student*) as well as (*his or her*) family and friends. We'll do our best to provide accurate information as it becomes available.

Members of our Crisis Response Team are available to meet with students individually and in groups today as well as over the coming days and weeks. Please contact the school office if you feel your child is in need of additional assistance; we have a list of school and community mental health resources.

Information about the funeral service will be made available as soon as we have it. If your child wishes to attend, we strongly encourage you to accompany him or her to the service. If the funeral is scheduled during school hours, students who wish to attend will need parental permission to be released from school.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or one of the school counselors with any questions or concerns.

Sample Death by Suicide Letter #4

It is with great sadness that I share with you (*name of student*), one of our (*grade level*) grade students, has died. All of us want you to know that we are here to help in any way we can. The family has requested that information about the cause of death not be shared at this time. We are aware that there has been some talk about the possibility that this was a suicide death.

Rumors may begin to circulate, and we ask that you not spread rumors since they may turn out to be inaccurate and can be deeply hurtful and unfair to (*name of student*), as well as (*his or her*)

family and friends. We'll do our best to provide accurate information as it becomes available. Since the subject has been raised, we do want to take this opportunity to remind you that suicide, when it does occur, is a very complicated act. We do not know all the causes or motivations for a suicide. One thing is certain: there are treatments that can help. Suicide should never, ever be an option.

Each of us will react to (*name of student*)'s death in our own way, and we need to be respectful of each other. Feeling sad is a normal response to any loss. Some students may not have known (*name of student*), very well and may not be as affected, while others may experience a great deal of sadness. Some may find they are having difficulty concentrating on schoolwork, and others may find that diving into work is a good distraction.

We have counselors available to help our school community deal with this sad loss. If you're child wishes to talk to a counselor, please encourage (him or her) to seek assistance from a teacher or counselor.

Death of an Employee (or Family Member)

Sample Death of an Employee Letter #1

We are deeply saddened by the death of one of our teachers, (*name of employee*), who died this morning after (*a long illness, a serious accident, etc.*). (*Name of employee*) was a (*grade*) teacher who had worked for (*number*) years at our school.

Your child's class had the opportunity to talk to (*crisis team member, counselors, teacher*) about some of their concerns. Your child may want to talk to you about his or her feelings. Talking about feelings will help your child deal with this tragic event.

Funeral services will be held (*provide details*). If you decide that you would like your child to attend the service, families are responsible for seeing that the students get to and from the service.

If you have any concerns about your child's reactions to this loss, please contact your child's teacher, the school counselors, or the administrative staff. Thank you for your concern at this difficult time.

Sample Death of an Employee Letter #2

I am sorry to inform you that a staff person died this morning. (*Insert what information can be shared about the cause and circumstances of the death*).

Our Crisis Response Team has been available to respond to the emotional needs of the students, and will continue to provide support for the remainder of the week. (*Identify specific grief counseling or classroom activities associated with the school's response.*)

If your family has experienced a death or similar loss recently, the death of (*name of employee*) may bring up feelings about that death. This is a normal experience. Please let your child's (*teacher or counselor*) know if there is any additional information the school should be aware of so we can provide the support your child needs.

Any time death touches us, it is stressful. This sudden death may be disturbing to you as well as to your child. It is for this reason that we especially want you to know of our care and support.

Accidents Involving Students and Staff

Sample Accident Letter #1

Your child was involved in a motor vehicle accident today while riding the school bus. Emergency personnel were called to the scene and evaluated your child. Based on their findings, it was not deemed necessary to transport your child to the hospital at that time. Emergency personnel made the decision that your child could be safely transferred back to school.

Upon arrival to the school, your child received a "post-accident" screening by the (*school nurse/medic*). This screening was performed at (*time am/pm*), and was directed at identifying any immediate life-threatening conditions. This "post-accident" screening is not to be confused with a full medical evaluation by a physician. School personnel are communicating that at the time of the screening, your child did not complain of any pain or injury, nor demonstrated any indication that an emergency condition existed. Your child's vital signs were within normal limits for his or her age at that time as well.

- I understand that my child has only received an initial evaluation by emergency personnel and a "post-accident" screening by the nurse/medic.
- I understand that a full medical evaluation HAS NOT been performed.
- I understand that if my child complains of pain, or I notice a change in my child's condition, I need to immediately take my child to the nearest hospital emergency room.

		AM/PM
Parent/Guardian Signature	School Nurse/Medic	Time

Sample School Bus Accident Letter #1

We wish to inform you of an accident that occurred this morning involving one of our school buses transporting students to (*name of school*). The incident occurred at (*provide location of accident*).

Four of the students were transported to Medical Center for observation after complaining of neck and back pain. Fortunately, these injuries were not life threatening, but we will always take the proper medical precautions to ensure the safety and well-being of our students. All of the other students were cleared by medical personnel on scene and allowed to board another bus to school. I also reported to the scene and checked on the students at the emergency room. All of the students were treated and released by noon.

The driver of the school bus was not injured. Local law enforcement is investigating the cause of this accident. We are also following our accident protocols as required by state statutes. Our transportation department has a very safe driving record, and this was an isolated incident. Regardless, we want you to be aware as we partner with you for the safety of your child. Thank you for entrusting your child to our care. Please contact me should you have questions.

Sample School Bus Accident Letter #2

We want to inform you of an incident that occurred last evening as students were being transported home from a field trip to the Art Museum. At approximately 7:30 p.m., one of our school buses was involved in a traffic accident at (*provide location of accident*), when another vehicle slid on the wet pavement and struck the bus from behind.

Of the 16 students on board at the time of the accident, none appeared to be injured in any way and all were given the opportunity to be evaluated by medical personnel on the scene. Families were notified and students were loaded on another bus and transported to school.

The driver of the school bus was not injured. Local law enforcement is investigating the cause of this accident. We are also following our accident protocols as required by state statutes.

Our transportation department has a very safe driving record, and this was an isolated incident. Regardless, we want you to be aware as we partner with you for the safety of your child. Thank you for entrusting your child to our care. Please contact me should you have questions.

Announcements of Deaths (to Students, Staff and Families)

Sample Announcement to Families

Our staff and students are saddened by news of the death of (*name of teacher*), a (*grade level*) grade teacher. This is a very sad day for the students, faculty, and colleagues of (*name of school*).

To provide support to our students and staff, we have asked the district's Crisis Response Team to assist our counselors in helping the (*children/students*) cope with this tragedy.

Thank you for your understanding at this difficult time. When we learn more information about visitation and funeral events, we will share it with you.

Sample Announcement to Students

Today we received the tragic news that one of our (*students or staff*), (**Name**), died last evening. (*Provide basic information about circumstances of the death.*)

When a loss like this occurs, we are likely to have different reactions and experience many different feelings. Some people will want to have a quiet time to remember (*name*), while others may want to talk to someone about how they are feeling. Some may want to continue working. We should be respectful to these different reactions and be supportive of each other.

It is stressful any time death touches us. This sudden death may be quite shocking to you and confuse you. For these reasons, we especially want you to know of our care and support. The school day will remain on schedule, but teachers may delay regular activities to allow you to talk. Please let your teacher know if you need to talk to a counselor.

We will keep you updated as we receive further information.

Sample Announcement to Staff

There are times when it is necessary to communicate news that is painful for all of us. During those times we must be prepared to support each other as we deal with the many feelings that we begin to experience. It is with great sorrow that I inform you that (*name*) at (*name of school*) passed away yesterday afternoon following a long illness.

Death can be difficult for us to understand, especially when it is sudden. We will all begin to feel different emotions: shock, sadness, confusion, and even some anger. What is most important is that we care for and support each other.

Sometimes students are affected by the death of someone important to them, and they may need to express their feelings. Please contact appropriate support service site staff if you notice a student who appears to be having more difficulty with (*his or her*) feelings than might be expected. We will keep you updated as more information becomes available.

General Announcements (for Other Incidents)

Sample Threat Letter #1

At approximately (*time*), today, (*date*), a threat that we do not believe has any credibility was found (*location*). However, in an abundance of caution we treat all threats as if they are serious. Our campus resource officers were notified and we also immediately began our own investigation, which includes the review of security camera footage to identify the potential perpetrator.

Although this threat has no credibility, we wanted to make you aware of the situation and let you know it is safe to send your child to school. Making a threat on a public school can have serious legal and financial consequences for the perpetrator. At the very least, it disrupts the learning environment for the students and consumes staff resources.

Besides the possibility of criminal charges, the suspect and his or her family could be liable for repaying law enforcement for the cost incurred during the investigation. The district will impose the strongest penalty within our jurisdiction on the perpetrator including long-term suspension. Please take a moment and remind your children that making any threat on a public school, business or other establishment is never a joke. The consequences can have a lifelong impact.

If you or your child has any information, please share that with your child's school principal.

Sample Threat Letter #2

A (*name school*) student was arrested on campus today after making disturbing comments about another (*school, student, teacher, staff member*) to other students. The school staff and the (*name of locale*) Police have been in touch with the student's family and appropriate disciplinary action is taking place.

Recent events at schools in other states have heightened everyone's concern for the safety of students. I want to assure you that we take any type of threat seriously and have the full cooperation of the police department. That policy will not change.

I encourage you to talk with your child about the seriousness of threats and the importance of reporting suspicious activities, threats or disturbing information to a trusted adult. Students also need to be aware that law enforcement agencies are taking these threats very seriously and are pursuing prosecution even when such incidents are intended as pranks.

Please make sure your child is aware of these ramifications and that he or she understands hoaxes related to campus safety will not be tolerated.

I appreciate your continued support of a safe learning environment for our students.

Sample Threat Letter #3

This letter is being sent home with students to provide you with accurate information, to discourage rumors, and to ask for your assistance. As you are aware, several recent threats of violence have occurred at local elementary and high schools in (*name district*)—mostly in the form of (*bomb threats, pellet guns, etc.*).

As with other threats, we have filed police reports and are working with law enforcement and staff members to assure all school campuses are safe.

We will not tolerate threats of any nature, especially when they continually disrupt the school day and result in countless hours of work to determine their validity and secure the safety of students and staff. In an effort to eliminate such disruptions, the district has instituted the following policies and procedures:

- (*List policies put in place such as holding meetings with students at each school level, make-up time for school closures, rewards for catching the perpetrators, silent witness hotline and telephone bulletin board with updates on information.*)

We need to come together as a community of students, families, and school personnel to end this disruption of student learning. I urge you to talk to your children now and impress upon them the seriousness of threats in today's society. Ask them to notify you or school personnel should they hear of any planned or potential disruptive behavior.

The safety of our students and staff is our number one priority, and we will continue to be vigilant. Please feel free to call my office (*telephone number*) or call your local school principal if you have any questions or comments.

Sample Threat Letter #4

Early this morning, a bomb threat was called into the (*name of school*) office. Our office staff immediately responded with the appropriate protocols. All students and staff were evacuated and emergency personnel were contacted.

In abundance of caution and in order to give emergency responders time to ensure the building was safe, buses were called so students could be housed while the building was being searched. Emergency responders confirmed the building was safe and there was no credible threat. Students returned to class and resumed normal activities.

We appreciate the students, staff and families for their calm, swift reaction to the evacuation. We also thank the (*name of locale*) Police Department and (*name of locale*) Fire Department for their immediate response and support.

TIP

Note the involvement or response of any public authorities if applicable. If disciplinary action was taken, inform families of that action and the outcomes, that is, student suspension, expulsion, etc.

Sample School Incident Letter #1

This letter is to inform you of an incident that occurred on our campus today. We want to make sure you have accurate information and dispel any rumors you may have heard about the incident.

(Describe the incident in detail [i.e., weapon on campus, fight, threatening note or graffiti, etc.] and the steps that were taken to remedy it.)

We take this incident seriously, and I ask for your help in addressing the important issue of student safety. Please take a moment to review our school safety policies with your child.

- (List the safety policies and consequences for infractions.)

Please check your child's backpack each day and make sure that they bring to school only those items that belong here. For (*name of school*) to remain a safe haven for children, we must all work together—families, staff, and community members—to provide the quality environment that our children deserve.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to call my office. Thank you for your support and assistance in keeping our campus safe for children.

Sample School Incident Letter #2

At 1:10 p.m. today, a security incident in close proximity to (*name of school*) resulted in the school being placed on lockdown. Law enforcement responded to a domestic situation at a residence two blocks from school.

As a precaution, the school was placed on lockdown for a brief period until police notified us that a perimeter was set up in the area. We then moved to a shelter-in-place in order to return to school activities. During the shelter-in-place, all students and staff remained inside for the rest of the day. All visitors were screened at the entrance prior to entering school.

The high school police liaison officer was stationed at the school during the shelter-in-place. We were given the all clear just prior to school dismissal time.

We wish to thank (*name of locale*) Police Department for their quick response and assistance during dismissal, and to our families for their patience. Our primary concern is always for the safety of our students and staff.

Sample School Incident (*in Neighboring School*) Letter #3

The tragic shooting incident at (*name of school district*) on (*date*) was horrific and incredibly frightening, especially for those who work in schools and have young children of their own. Our hearts go out to the families affected by this tragedy. In times like these, it is important that we, as parents and educators, monitor our children's reactions, and gauge our response accordingly.

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) provides the following tips to help children deal with the aftermath of this tragedy.

- Provide a developmentally appropriate, clear, and straightforward explanation of the event.
- Return to normalcy and routine to the best extent possible while maintaining flexibility.
- Let children know that it's okay to feel upset or angry.
- Be a good listener and observer.
- Provide various ways for children to express emotion, such as through journaling, letter writing, talking, making a collage, or music.
- Focus on resiliency as well as the compassion of others.

The NASP has developed a resource for addressing violence titled *Talking to Children About Violence: Tips for Parents and Teachers*. Additional information can also be found at www.nasponline.org.

It is important to keep in mind that an event like this is rare and that schools are one of the safest places for children and youth during the school day. Should you choose to talk with your children about these events, it may help to emphasize that schools are safe places and that all schools conduct drills to ensure safety.

Rest assured that safety is our first priority. Should families need further information or resources, please contact your school principal. District counselors remain available for any student in need of assistance. Thank you for your support.

Sample School Incident Message #4

This past weekend, I was informed by the (*name*) Police Department that one of our social studies teachers and girls' soccer coach was arrested on allegations of taking pictures of students without consent. Mr. (*name*) has resigned his position.

However, if you or your student has information regarding this investigation, we encourage you to call (*name*) Police Department at (*number*). We are committed to the safety of our students and expect all staff to adhere to the highest ethical practices and conduct. We will not tolerate behaviors that compromise the safety of our children. Thank you.

Sample Child Abduction or Attempted Abduction Letter #1

In light of the recent abduction of (*name*) in (*another part of our community*), and because of reports of suspicious activity in our own area, we are communicating with all families and guardians.

The facts are (*include verified information*). We are currently working with local law enforcement to ensure our campuses are safe. Meanwhile, we remind all families and children to exercise caution at this time.

Police have indicated that if you observe suspicious activity, you should note the following information and then call 9-1-1:

- Record the license number, color, make, and model of the vehicle, as well as any identifying marks on the vehicle.
- Describe the suspect, noting approximate height and weight; color, length and style of hair; presence of facial hair; distinctive clothing; or other markings.

We reviewed safety precautions with students and reminded them to walk in groups or pairs rather than alone, and to be alert to what is going on around them.

We encourage you to reinforce these messages with your children and ask them to take the same precautions during non-school hours and on weekends. You may also want to discuss the tips listed above in case they observe suspicious activity.

We share your desire to keep all children safe, and we will keep you informed of any new developments.

Sample Child Abduction or Attempted Abduction Letter #2

The safety of our students is the number one priority at (*name of school*). As always, we want to keep you informed of important issues in our school community. We learned an adult male approached one of our students walking home from school last night at (*provide location*). The male attempted to lure the student into his car. Law enforcement is currently investigating. Anyone with information that may be helpful to the investigation is encouraged to contact the (*name of locale*) Police Department at (*telephone number*).

This incident serves as a reminder for students to practice safety measures while going to and from school. The following will help you discuss safety with your child.

- Walk in groups or pairs to and from school.
- Never accept rides from strangers.
- If approached by a stranger, keep a safe distance and think of a direction to run if needed.
- Run to a safe place, i.e. school, church, store, etc.
- Shout and yell as loud as you can.
- Never give out your name or address to people you do not know. This is especially true on the Internet.
- Always let your families know where you are; take the same route to and from school each day.

Sample Weapon at School Letter #1

Recognizing families' rights and needs for timely and accurate information about student safety, I want to share with you an incident that occurred recently at (*name of school*).

Yesterday afternoon, a (*grade level*) grade student was taken into custody for allegedly bringing a weapon onto school premises.

This morning an anonymous tip was provided to a teacher that a student might have been in possession of a gun. The school, in cooperation with the (*name*) Police Department, began an immediate investigation. Our school administrators and the (*name*) Police Department questioned witnesses and the student. The student faces disciplinary action and is currently not in school.

As with all matters of student safety, we have taken this very seriously and have acted accordingly, utilizing both school system disciplinary recourse and the juvenile justice system. I want to thank those families and students who have provided us with the information necessary to investigate and bring closure to this incident. Please encourage your child to let a teacher or administrator know if a situation exists that could ever place him or her and others in danger.

Only by working as a school community in partnership with families, can we create and maintain the level of safety that we want for our children and that they certainly deserve.

Sample Weapon at School Letter #2

Working in partnership with families to provide open communication and ensure the safety of all students, I wanted to inform you of an event that occurred today. We received a report that a (*grade level*) grade student flashed a knife on the school bus this morning. Administrators took immediate action and called the (*name*) Police Department. We acted promptly to confiscate the weapon and begin disciplinary action.

The student was taken into custody by the Police Department. It is Board of Education policy that any student who brings a weapon on school property or to a school sponsored event faces disciplinary action.

Providing a safe and secure learning environment is of top priority for our school system and we take these incidents very seriously. Extensive security measures are in place to help us maintain a safe campus.

Please take this opportunity to speak to your child about the importance of school safety. While peer pressure is great at this age, we want to encourage students to feel comfortable reporting any information they may have that compromises their safety and the safety of others. Working together we can maintain an environment where students are free to focus on learning.

As always, I welcome your comments and questions. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you should have any concerns.

Sample Student Assault Letter #1

This letter is to inform you that a student assault occurred (*information regarding whether the assault/harassment took place on or off campus, and any other information that can be provided without violating a victim's confidentiality.*)

All of us will be feeling a variety of emotions, including shock, sadness, and anger. I want you to know that we, the (*name of school*) staff, care about the emotions our students may be experiencing.

Our Crisis Response Team has developed plans to respond to the emotional needs of students. (*Clarify what is being done, including grief counseling, classroom debriefing, referrals, etc. Also list the school support services and collaborating agencies that are available for the child/family.*) Law enforcement is currently investigating the case.

It is extremely stressful any time violence touches us. If your family has experienced a trauma or loss recently, this assault may trigger feelings about your situation. This is a normal experience. Please inform your child's (*teacher or counselor*) if there is additional information the school should be aware of so we can provide the support your child needs.

Sample Student Assault Letter #2

A student in (*teacher's name*) (*grade*) class was the victim of (*assault, molestation, attempted murder*) (*yesterday, today, over the weekend*).

(*Name of student*) is currently receiving care at (*medical center/hospital*). We are saddened by this tragic event. Your child's class had the opportunity to talk to (counselors, teachers, Crisis Response Team) about some of their concerns.

During this time, your child may be feeling confused and have a lot of questions about this situation. It is important to listen to your child and discuss his or her concerns. We have attached some information that you may find useful on how to help your child deal with this issue.

A special trust fund has been set up for (*name of student*) and her family to help defray medical expenses. If you would like to contribute, please contact (*provide details of financial institution*).

We will keep you informed on (*name of student*) progress and ask that you keep (*him or her*) in your thoughts and prayers. Please feel free to call the school office at if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your concern and support.

Sample Health Alert Letter #1

As you may already know, an outbreak of (*measles, head lice, meningitis etc.*) has occurred in (*our school, the district, the community*).

We are doing everything possible to protect the health of our students and limit the spread of (*measles, head lice, meningitis etc.*). (*Explain what the situation is and what steps are being taken*).

Our school (*and district*) nurses are staying informed and monitoring the situation every day. I have attached some information about (*measles, head lice, meningitis, etc.*). If you would like more information, please call (*County Health, Community Information and Referral, etc.*).

Let me assure you that the health and well-being of our students is our top priority and we are doing everything possible to address the situation.

Please feel free to contact my office if you have any questions or concerns.

Sample Health Alert Letter #2

(*Name of school*) has not had any reported cases of community-acquired methicillin-resistant staphylococcus infection (CA-MRSA), an antibiotic-resistant type of *staph infection*, but we would like to share ways to help students reduce their risk of contracting the infection.

Several school districts in the region have reported serious cases of the infection, which is passed through person-to-person contact, and is highly resistant to antibiotics. MRSA infections usually begin with a skin infection, and can become serious or fatal if left untreated. While we most often hear of student athletes contracting MRSA, **all students** should take precautions.

The best way to prevent MRSA is to practice good personal hygiene and to avoid contact with another person's open skin lesions. Students should wash their hands often and thoroughly and avoid sharing personal items such as towels, soap, and clothing.

The National Athletic Trainers' Association has developed a list of 10 recommendations to prevent contracting MRSA, which are listed on the back of this letter. The school system provides safe and clean athletic facilities and equipment, and we follow all cleaning guidelines and procedures recommended by the National Athletic Trainers' Association.

The prevention of CA-MRSA requires a community effort so please take the time to read and observe prevention measures. If students notice any skin infection, such as pimples, pustules, or boils, which are abnormally red, painful, or have drainage, please have them checked by your

family doctor. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the health department or your child's school nurse.

TIP

Refer to vaccination programs available in your community and other related resources, if they apply.

Sample Emergency Protocol Communications

These messages are for school secretaries or others who answer phones when word is out about a school that has gone into a School Safe Condition (for example, lockdown, shelter-in-place, evacuation, etc.)

- (*Name of school*) was placed in a lockdown at (*time*) at the request of the (*name*) Police Department due to an incident in the neighborhood. Police responded to reports of suspicious activity. We were given the all clear at (*time*), and returned to our normal school activities. No students or staff were in harm's way. Thank you for your call and concern.
- An attempted robbery that occurred at the convenience store near (*name of school*) resulted in the school being put in a shelter-in-place condition for approximately 25 minutes early this afternoon. The shelter-in-place means no one can leave the building, and all doors are locked preventing any access to the school. School activities go on as scheduled during this time. If the situation were to have been warranted, we would have gone into a lockdown. More information about today's incident will be shared in a communication to families tonight.
- We apologize that we could not answer the phones at mid-morning. We were in a lockdown as recommended by police due to an incident involving a suspicious person with a weapon on the school's property. During lockdown procedures all persons inside the school move to a safe location, turn off all lights, and remain quiet until an all clear is given. The lockdown lasted approximately 10 minutes while police subdued the individual and took him into custody. We apologize if these events frightened you as a parent/guardian. Our first priority is to make sure all students and staff are safe. Thank you for your understanding.
- We apologize that we could not answer the phones for a period of time this afternoon. We were evacuated when smoke and fumes from an overheated cooler in the kitchen caused the fire alarms to be activated. (*Name*) Fire Department responded and used large fans to vent the building. We returned to school approximately 50 minutes after the initial

evacuation. Students were grouped by classroom and teachers conducted some activities on the playfields during the evacuation period. We appreciate your support and concerns.

Sample Emergency Communication #1

As we enter spring, I want to remind you of (*name of school district*) emergency communication procedures. Should an unexpected event, such as sudden severe weather, occur during the school day, our top priority is keeping your children safe.

In order to focus our attention on student safety during a district-wide emergency, communication efforts will be coordinated at the district level. Our internal communication system allows central administration to be continuously in touch with campuses. We urge families to please avoid telephoning the school or district, as phone systems and the resources to operate them could be inaccessible during extreme situations.

In a true emergency, events happen fast and situations can vary from campus to campus. We will do our best to keep you informed in a timely manner, especially as it pertains to early or delayed dismissal times, transportation issues, and any other changes to your child's instructional day.

Throughout the course of an emergency, we will use the following methods to communicate with you:

- Facebook (www.facebook.com/stocktonunified): Messages will be posted as quickly as possible to our Facebook page. You do not have to sign up for Facebook to view these pages; however, followers will receive instant updates in their newsfeeds. We will update our Facebook page throughout any crisis.
- Website (www.stocktonusd.net): District-wide emergency messages and updates will be posted on the district home page as they develop.
- School Messenger (email and telephone messages): We will provide updated information as needed to all parent and emergency contact telephone numbers and email addresses in the system. This may be utilized for specific campus or groups of campuses.
- Local news media: When appropriate, we will make information available to local television and radio stations and will enlist their assistance in communicating with our audiences.

Please remember that we work very hard to keep your children safe at school. In the event of severe weather or other emergency where conditions outside the school are unsafe, we will shelter our students and staff in place and avoid sending anyone outside of the building until the threat has passed.

During such emergencies, we urge you to avoid coming to the school until you are notified that dismissals have resumed. If you choose to do so, there may be significant delays in our ability to release individual students to families, as our priority will be maintaining the safety of the overall campus population. When regular dismissal times or procedures are altered due to an emergency, we will have a student sign-out process in place for the safety of all concerned.

Every day we endeavor to stay focused on learning in a secure instructional environment; however, we are prepared for the unexpected. Planning ahead is our best safeguard. Thank you for partnering with us to keep our school safe.

Sample Emergency Communication #2

The safety and well-being of our students and staff is a priority. Our goal is for all students to achieve high academic standards within a safe learning environment.

Because of recent events (*shootings, bomb threats, etc.*), we think it is important to remind families and students about our policies to ensure a safe learning environment, and we ask that you review them with your children:

- (List policies on weapons, drugs, gang/hate group dress or behavior, and threats or intimidation, visitor's policies, etc.)

The school district (or school) has also provided for student safety with (name any new or upcoming programs or services that have been put in place). We will continue to evaluate and update our programs so that all students can enjoy a safe, positive school experience.

Our goal is to provide an educational program that honors diversity and academics and focuses on the needs of students. Thank you for your help and support of our efforts to accomplish this goal.

Sample Emergency Communication #3

(*Name of school*) recently participated in a cooperative emergency crisis response drill with the (*name*) Police and Fire Departments. This drill was conducted to determine how a crisis situation might be handled should it occur on one of our campuses.

We will conduct other types of drills in the coming months. These drills are essential to implementing our Emergency Crisis Management Plan. Your child may come home and talk about (*describe the drill procedures*).

It is regrettable that we must plan and practice for such possible occurrences, but, in light of serious tragedies on other school campuses, we feel that such drills are essential for the safety of our children.

Working together we can ensure that the educational process is allowed to continue in the safe, uninterrupted environment that our children deserve.

TIP

Consider communicating to families and the school's neighbors before a drill or emergency exercise takes place, and post signs around the school to prevent undue alarm when the drill or exercise is underway.

Sample Drug Dog on Campus Letter:

We want to partner with you for the safety of your child and are deeply committed to the safety of everyone on our campus. While our primary goal is to focus on learning, efforts are ongoing to provide the safest learning environment possible for every child at (*name of school*).

As part of that effort we recently invited the (*name*) Police Department's K-9 Unit to visit our campus. K-9 dogs led by trained officers are available to visit schools and provide an added measure of safety.

As always, students do not come in contact with the dogs and strict measures are taken to maintain student safety and privacy.

We welcome this participation from the police and appreciate them helping us send a message that drugs and alcohol are not tolerated at (*name of school*).

In addition, we maintain school safety through the use of school surveillance systems, additional school radios, and surveillance equipment on all school buses. We welcome your input as we strive to provide the safest learning environment possible at (*name of school*).

Our administrators will be happy to speak with you if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to serve your children and for the support you provide.

Sample Misbehavior on the Bus Letter

I would like to make you aware of a recent situation and solicit your help as a partner in your child's safety. This week, four students behaved in a very inappropriate manner on the school

bus. Disciplinary action has been taken and disciplinary protocol will be followed using school board policy.

At (*name of school*), we have very high standards of conduct that are expected of all students. The same code of conduct for the classroom applies to the buses as well.

Students should be reminded that all buses are equipped with surveillance cameras, and behavior is monitored closely.

Please encourage your child to report any behavior that could in any way compromise their safety or the safety of others on the bus. Working together, we can maintain a safe educational experience for your child. Join me in stressing to your children the importance of respecting themselves and each other.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call me or the transportation department.

Sample Employee Strike/Work Action Let

ter:As you may be aware, (*company name*) that is contracted to provide school-bus transportation for students, is facing the possibility of a bus driver work action or strike. The bus drivers voted to reject the contract offered by (*company name*). The vote authorizes their union to call a strike. We will be notified within 24 hours of an impending strike. Although a strike is possible, there is still a chance that the bus drivers and (*company name*) will resolve their dispute without disrupting our students.

Should the drivers go on strike, please be advised we will remain open. However, we will ask families to help get their children to school. Please work with each other to arrange carpools as much as possible, and to make sure your children do not walk to school along unsafe streets.

I know this will be a problem for some families who rely on the school buses. This was a difficult decision, and we weighed this against the hardship for families who may not be able to make other arrangements if we cancel school and the importance of protecting our children's education from disruption.

We plan to bring in additional staff before and after school to supervise students whose families must drop them off early or pick them up late. We will have staff at the schools from 6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

We are working out plans to address after-school activities, clubs and sports that require transportation. Please stay tuned for additional information.

If the drivers' union and bus company cannot reach a settlement agreement, it will cause major disruption to students, families, teachers, and staff. Although we have very little control over the situation, we are prepared to do everything we can to minimize the disruption.

Thank you for your understanding as we work through this challenge.

Board Policies & Administrative Regulations

[BP 1000 Concepts & Roles](#)

The Board of Education desires to represent the community and provide leadership in addressing community issues related to education. In order to identify community concerns and enlist support for the schools, the Board shall establish effective two-way communication systems between schools and the community.

Schools, parents/guardians, community members and local organizations must continually collaborate as partners. The Board and the Superintendent or designee shall work together with city and county agencies and organizations to promote and facilitate coordinated services for children, and shall seek to develop partnerships with local businesses.

(cf. [1400](#) - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. [1700](#) - Relations between Private Industry and the Schools)

The Board recognizes that schools are an important community resource and encourages community members to make appropriate use of school facilities. Community members are also encouraged to attend Board meetings, participate in school activities, and take an active interest in issues that affect the schools. The Board and Superintendent or designee shall keep community members well informed about district needs and accomplishments and shall ensure that they have opportunities to share in developing educational policies, programs and evaluation processes.

(cf. [0510](#) - School Accountability Report Card)

(cf. [1220](#) - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. [1240](#) - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. [1330](#) - Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

(cf. 6141 - Curriculum Development and Evaluation)

(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)

The Board recognizes that its ability to fulfill the community's expectations for a high-quality educational program depends on the level of support provided by the state and federal government as well as the community. The Board therefore shall study legislative processes and issues, establish ongoing relationships with state and local leaders and the media, adopt positions

on key issues, set priorities for advocacy, and collaborate with other organizations and coalitions in legislative and legal advocacy efforts.

(cf. [1112](#) - Media Relations)

(cf. [1160](#) - Political Processes)

(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35160 Authority of governing boards

35172 Promotional activities

Policy STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California

BP 1100 Communication With The Public

The Board of Education recognizes the district's responsibility to keep the public informed regarding the goals, programs, achievements, and needs of the schools and district and to be responsive to the concerns and interests of the community. The Superintendent or designee shall establish strategies for effective two-way communications between the district and the public and shall consult with the Board regarding the role of Board members as advocates for the district's students, programs, and policies.

(cf. 5020 - Parent Rights and Responsibilities)

(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board and staff with communications protocols and procedures to assist the district in presenting a consistent, unified message on district issues. Such protocols and procedures may include, but are not limited to, identification of the spokesperson(s) authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the district, strategies for coordinating communications efforts and activities, and legal requirements pertaining to confidentiality as well as the public's right to access records.

(cf. [1112](#) - Media Relations)

(cf. [1340](#) - Access to District Records)

(cf. 2111 - Superintendent Governance Standards)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

(cf. 9005 - Governance Standards)

(cf. 9010 - Public Statements)

(cf. 9011 - Disclosure of Confidential/Privileged Information)

The Superintendent or designee shall utilize a variety of methods to provide information to the public with access to information. Such methods may include, but are not limited to, district and school newsletters, web sites, social media, electronic communications, mailings, notices sent home with students, recorded telephone messages for parent/guardian information, community forums and public events, news releases, meetings with education reporters and editorial boards, presentations at parent organization meetings, and meetings with representatives of local governments, community organizations, and businesses.

(cf. [0510](#) - School Accountability Report Card)

(cf. [1113](#) - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. [1114](#) - District-Sponsored Social Media)

(cf. [1400](#) - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. [1700](#) - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools)

In developing communications strategies, the Superintendent or designee shall take into account the needs of all members of the public, including individuals with disabilities and those whose primary language is not English.

(cf. [0410](#) - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

The Superintendent or designee may provide staff members with professional development to assist them in effectively responding to requests for information or assistance by parents/guardians or members of the public.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide multiple avenues and opportunities for members of the public to give input on district and school issues and operations. Community members are encouraged to become involved in school activities, participate on district and school committees, provide input at Board meetings, submit suggestions to district staff, and use the district's complaint procedures as appropriate.

(cf. [0460](#) - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

(cf. [1220](#) - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. [1230](#) - School-Connected Organizations)

(cf. [1240](#) - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. [1250](#) - Visitors/Outsiders)

(cf. [1260](#) - Educational Foundation)

(cf. [1312.1](#) - Complaints Concerning District Employees)

(cf. [1312.2](#) - Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials)

(cf. [1312.3](#) - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. [1312.4](#) - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)

(cf. 9323 - Meeting Conduct)

Mass Mailings at Public Expense

Newsletters or mass mailings regarding ballot measures, candidates, legislative activities, or any other campaign activities shall be sent and distributed in accordance with law and Board policy.

(cf. [1160](#) - Political Processes)

A mass mailing is prohibited if all of the following criteria are met: (Government Code [89001-89002](#))

1. The mailing involves sending a tangible item, such as a videotape, record, button, or written document, which is delivered by any means to recipients at their residence, place of employment or business, or post office box.
2. The item features a Board member or includes the name, office, photograph, or other reference to a Board member and is prepared or sent in cooperation, consultation, coordination, or concert with the Board member.
3. The costs of distribution, or any costs of design, production, and printing exceeding \$50, are paid with district funds.
4. More than 200 substantially similar items, as defined in Government Code [89002](#), are sent in a single calendar month.

The above prohibition does not apply to the types of mass mailings specified in Government Code [89002](#)(b), including, but not limited to: (Government Code [89002](#))

1. An item in which the Board member's name appears only in a roster containing the names of all Board members or in the letterhead or logotype of the stationery, forms, and envelopes of the district, a district committee, or the Board member

2. An announcement including only a single mention of the Board member's name which concerns a public meeting related to the Board member's duties or any official district event(s) for which the district is providing the use of its facilities, staff, or other financial support

3. A business card that contains only one mention of the Board member's name and no photograph of the Board member

However, any of the excepted mailings listed in items #1-3 above that meets the criteria for prohibited mass mailings shall not be sent within 60 days preceding an election in which a Board member to whom the mailing relates will appear on the ballot as a candidate. (Government Code [89003](#))

Comprehensive Communications Plan

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a written communications plan which establishes priorities for proactive community outreach to build support for district programs and issues. The plan shall identify specific communications goals aligned with the district's vision and goals for student learning. For each communications goal, the plan shall identify key messages, individuals or groups that can help the district achieve its goal, strategies tailored to each target audience, timelines, persons responsible for each activity, and budget implications.

(cf. [0000](#) - Vision)

(cf. [0200](#) - Goals for the School District)

As appropriate for each issue, target audiences may include parents/guardians, the media, local governmental agencies, businesses, community organizations and civic groups, postsecondary institutions, health care professionals, child care providers, community leaders, state or federal legislators or agencies, and/or other segments of the public.

The plan shall incorporate strategies for effective communications during a crisis or other emergency situation that may arise.

(cf. [0450](#) - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the district's communications plan and recommend to the Board whether the goals and key issues identified in the plan need to be revised to meet changing circumstances or priorities.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

7054 Use of district property or funds re: ballot measures and candidates

35145.5 Board meetings, public participation

35172 Promotional activities

38130-38138 Civic Center Act

48980-48985 Parental notifications

GOVERNMENT CODE

54957.5 Meeting agendas and materials

82041.5 Mass mailing

89001-89003 Newsletter or mass mailing

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2

18901.1 Campaign-related mailings sent at public expense

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.101-35.190 Americans with Disabilities Act

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California School Public Relations Association: <http://www.calspra.org>

Fair Political Practices Commission: <http://www.fppc.ca.gov>

Policy STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California

[BP 1112 Media Relations](#)

The Board of Education recognizes the district's responsibility to keep the public informed regarding the goals, programs, achievements, and needs of the schools and district and to be responsive to the concerns and interests of the community. The Superintendent or designee shall establish strategies for effective two-way communications between the district and the public and shall consult with the Board regarding the role of Board members as advocates for the district's students, programs, and policies.

(cf. 5020 - Parent Rights and Responsibilities)

(cf. 9000 - Role of the Board)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide the Board and staff with communications protocols and procedures to assist the district in presenting a consistent, unified message on district issues. Such protocols and procedures may include, but are not limited to, identification of the spokesperson(s) authorized to speak to the media on behalf of the district, strategies for coordinating communications efforts and activities, and legal requirements pertaining to confidentiality as well as the public's right to access records.

(cf. [1112](#) - Media Relations)

(cf. [1340](#) - Access to District Records)

(cf. 2111 - Superintendent Governance Standards)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

(cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

(cf. 9005 - Governance Standards)

(cf. 9010 - Public Statements)

(cf. 9011 - Disclosure of Confidential/Privileged Information)

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(cf. [0510](#) - School Accountability Report Card)

(cf. [1113](#) - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. [1114](#) - District-Sponsored Social Media)

(cf. [1400](#) - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. [1700](#) - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools)

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(cf. [0410](#) - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

The Superintendent or designee may provide staff members with professional development to assist them in effectively responding to requests for information or assistance by parents/guardians or members of the public.

(cf. [4131](#) - Staff Development)

(cf. [4231](#) - Staff Development)

(cf. [4331](#) - Staff Development)

The Superintendent or designee shall provide multiple avenues and opportunities for members of the public to give input on district and school issues and operations. Community members are encouraged to become involved in school activities, participate on district and school committees, provide input at Board meetings, submit suggestions to district staff, and use the district's complaint procedures as appropriate.

(cf. [0460](#) - Local Control and Accountability Plan)

(cf. [1220](#) - Citizen Advisory Committees)

(cf. [1230](#) - School-Connected Organizations)

(cf. [1240](#) - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. [1250](#) - Visitors/Outsiders)

(cf. [1260](#) - Educational Foundation)

(cf. [1312.1](#) - Complaints Concerning District Employees)

(cf. [1312.2](#) - Complaints Concerning Instructional Materials)

(cf. [1312.3](#) - Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. [1312.4](#) - Williams Uniform Complaint Procedures)

(cf. 3555 - Nutrition Program Compliance)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)

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(cf. [1160](#) - Political Processes)

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2. The item features a Board member or includes the name, office, photograph, or other reference to a Board member and is prepared or sent in cooperation, consultation, coordination, or concert with the Board member.
3. The costs of distribution, or any costs of design, production, and printing exceeding \$50, are paid with district funds.
4. More than 200 substantially similar items, as defined in Government Code [89002](#), are sent in a single calendar month.

The above prohibition does not apply to the types of mass mailings specified in Government Code [89002](#)(b), including, but not limited to: (Government Code [89002](#))

1. An item in which the Board member's name appears only in a roster containing the names of all Board members or in the letterhead or logotype of the stationery, forms, and envelopes of the district, a district committee, or the Board member

2. An announcement including only a single mention of the Board member's name which concerns a public meeting related to the Board member's duties or any official district event(s) for which the district is providing the use of its facilities, staff, or other financial support

3. A business card that contains only one mention of the Board member's name and no photograph of the Board member

However, any of the excepted mailings listed in items #1-3 above that meets the criteria for prohibited mass mailings shall not be sent within 60 days preceding an election in which a Board member to whom the mailing relates will appear on the ballot as a candidate. (Government Code [89003](#))

Comprehensive Communications Plan

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a written communications plan which establishes priorities for proactive community outreach to build support for district programs and issues. The plan shall identify specific communications goals aligned with the district's vision and goals for student learning. For each communications goal, the plan shall identify key messages, individuals or groups that can help the district achieve its goal, strategies tailored to each target audience, timelines, persons responsible for each activity, and budget implications.

(cf. [0000](#) - Vision)

(cf. [0200](#) - Goals for the School District)

As appropriate for each issue, target audiences may include parents/guardians, the media, local governmental agencies, businesses, community organizations and civic groups, postsecondary institutions, health care professionals, child care providers, community leaders, state or federal legislators or agencies, and/or other segments of the public.

The plan shall incorporate strategies for effective communications during a crisis or other emergency situation that may arise.

(cf. [0450](#) - Comprehensive Safety Plan)

(cf. 3516 - Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)

The Superintendent or designee shall periodically evaluate the implementation and effectiveness of the district's communications plan and recommend to the Board whether the goals and key issues identified in the plan need to be revised to meet changing circumstances or priorities.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

7054 Use of district property or funds re: ballot measures and candidates

35145.5 Board meetings, public participation

35172 Promotional activities

38130-38138 Civic Center Act

48980-48985 Parental notifications

GOVERNMENT CODE

54957.5 Meeting agendas and materials

82041.5 Mass mailing

89001-89003 Newsletter or mass mailing

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 2

18901.1 Campaign-related mailings sent at public expense

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 28

35.101-35.190 Americans with Disabilities Act

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California School Public Relations Association: <http://www.calspra.org>

Fair Political Practices Commission: <http://www.fppc.ca.gov>

Policy STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California

AR 1113 District & School Websites

Design Standards

The Superintendent or designee shall develop design standards for district and school web sites that include, but are not limited to, guidelines to ensure the clear organization of the material, readability of the font type and size, and simplicity of the navigation structure linking the content on the web site. Such standards shall take into consideration the ease of use on a wide range of devices.

In accordance with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, district and school web sites shall contain features that ensure accessibility for individuals with disabilities, which may include, but are not limited to, captions for videos and multimedia presentations, text alternatives to images, provision of sufficient time to use the content, avoidance of flashing images, adequate contrast in visual presentations, and/or other features that meet applicable standards for web site accessibility. The Superintendent or designee shall regularly review district and school web sites and modify them as needed to ensure legal compliance with accessibility standards.

(cf. [0410](#) - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

Web Site Content

As applicable, district and school web sites shall provide current information regarding the district's mission and goals, district/school programs and operations, district/school news, agendas and minutes of Board of Education meetings, School Accountability Report Cards, school calendars, and links to educational resources.

(cf. [0440](#) - District Technology Plan)

(cf. [0510](#) - School Accountability Report Card)

(cf. [1100](#) - Communication with the Public)

(cf. 9322 - Agenda/Meeting Materials)

With approval of the principal, individual teachers may create web pages linked to the district or school web site to provide information pertaining to class assignments, expectations, and activities.

Student work may be published on district or school web sites provided that both the student and his/her parent/guardian provide written permission or the work is part of an existing publication such as a school newspaper.

Any copyrighted material to be posted on a district or school web site shall be submitted to the Superintendent or designee together with the permission of the copyright owner to reprint the material. Any copyrighted material submitted without the copyright owner's permission shall only be posted on a district or school web site if the Superintendent or designee determines that the material is in the public domain or that the intended use meets the criteria for fair use or

another exception pursuant to 17 USC [107-122](#). When any copyrighted material is posted, the web site shall include a notice crediting the copyright owner and, as necessary, shall note that permission to reprint the material was granted.

(cf. 4132/4232/4332 - Publication or Creation of Materials)

(cf. 6162.6 - Use of Copyrighted Materials)

Whenever a district or school web site includes links to external web sites, it shall include a disclaimer that the district is not responsible for the content of external web sites.

Roles and Responsibilities

Any employee assigned as a district or school webmaster shall be responsible for the uploading of material to the web site(s) upon approval of the Superintendent or designee. He/she shall review district and school web sites to ensure consistency with district standards, regularly check links for accuracy and appropriateness, keep the web server free of outdated or unused files, and provide technical assistance as needed.

The Superintendent or designee may assign additional staff members to conduct editorial reviews of all materials submitted for publication on district or school web sites and to make corrections as needed in spelling, grammar, or accuracy of content.

The Superintendent or designee shall provide staff development opportunities related to district content guidelines, design standards, and accessibility laws and standards to district communications and technology staff, district and school webmasters, and/or other appropriate staff.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Security

The Superintendent or designee shall establish security procedures for the district's computer network to prevent unauthorized access and changes to district and school websites. To the extent possible, the host computer(s) shall be in a lockable room with restricted access.

Policy STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California

BP 1114 Community Relations District Sponsored Social Media

The Board of Education recognizes the value of technology such as social media platforms in promoting community involvement and collaboration. The purpose of any official district social media platform shall be to further the district's vision and mission, support student learning and staff professional development, and enhance communication with students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members.

(cf. [0000](#) - Vision)

(cf. [0440](#) - District Technology Plan)

(cf. [1100](#) - Communication with the Public)

(cf. [1112](#) - Media Relations)

(cf. [1113](#) - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

(cf. 6145.5 - Student Organizations and Equal Access)

The Superintendent or designee shall develop content guidelines and protocols for official district social media platforms to ensure the appropriate and responsible use of these resources and compliance with law, Board policy, and regulation.

Guidelines for Content

Official district social media platforms shall be used only for their stated purposes and in a manner consistent with this policy and administrative regulation. By creating these official sites and allowing for public comment, the Board does not intend to create a limited public forum or otherwise guarantee an individual's right to free speech.

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6145.5 - Student Organizations and Equal Access)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the limited purpose of the official district social media platforms is clearly communicated to users. Each site shall contain a statement that specifies the site's purposes along with a statement that users are expected to use the site only for those purposes. Each site shall also contain a statement that users are personally responsible for the content of their posts.

Official district social media platforms may not contain content that is obscene, libelous, or so incites students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, violation of school rules, or substantial disruption of the school's orderly operation.

(cf. 5131 - Conduct)

Staff or students who post prohibited content shall be subject to discipline in accordance with district policies and administrative regulations.

(cf. 4040 - Employee Use of Technology)

(cf. 4118 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
 (cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)
 (cf. 4218 - Dismissal/Suspension/Disciplinary Action)
 (cf. 5144 - Discipline)
 (cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)
 (cf. 6163.4 - Student Use of Technology)

Users of official district social media platforms should be aware of the public nature and accessibility of social media and that information posted may be considered a public record subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act. The Board expects users to conduct themselves in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner.

(cf. [1340](#) - Access to District Records)
 (cf. 9012 - Board Member Electronic Communications)

Privacy

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that the privacy rights of students, parents/guardians, staff, Board members, and other individuals are protected on official district social media platforms.

Board policy pertaining to the posting of student photographs and the privacy of telephone numbers, home addresses, and email addresses, as specified in BP 1113 - District and School Web Sites, shall also apply to official district social media platforms.
 (cf. 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information)

Social media and networking sites and other online platforms shall not be used by district employees to transmit confidential information about students, employees, or district operations.
 (cf. 4119.23/4219.23/4319.23 - Unauthorized Release of Confidential/Privileged Information)
 (cf. 5022 - Student and Family Privacy Rights)
 (cf. 5125 - Student Records)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

32261 School safety, definitions of bullying and electronic act
 35182.5 Contracts for advertising
 48900 Grounds for suspension and expulsion
 48907 Exercise of free expression; rules and regulations
 48950 Speech and other communication
 49061 Definitions, directory information
 49073 Release of directory information
 60048 Commercial brand names, contracts or logos

GOVERNMENT CODE

3307.5 Publishing identity of public safety officers

6250-6270 Public Records Act, especially:

6254.21 Publishing addresses and phone numbers of officials

6254.24 Definition of public safety official

54952.2 Brown Act, definition of meeting

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 17

101-1101 Federal copyright law

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

1232g Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 29

157 Employee rights to engage in concerted, protected activity

794 Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973; accessibility to federal web sites

CODE OF FEDERAL REGULATIONS, TITLE 34

99.1-99.67 Family Educational Rights and Privacy

COURT DECISIONS

Page v. Lexington County School District, (2008, 4th Cir.) 531 F.3d 275

Downs v. Los Angeles Unified School District, (2000) 228 F.3d 1003

Aaris v. Las Virgenes Unified School District, (1998) 64 Cal.App.4th 1112

Perry Education Association v. Perry Local Educators' Association, (1983) 460 U.S. 37

Board of Education, Island Trees Union Free School District, et.al. v. Pico, (1982) 457 U.S. 853

NATIONAL LABOR RELATIONS BOARD DECISIONS

18-CA-19081 Sears Holdings, December 4, 2009

Management Resources:

FACEBOOK PUBLICATIONS

Facebook for Educators Guide, 2011

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

California School Public Relations Association: <http://www.calspra.org>

Facebook in Education: <http://www.facebook.com/education>

Facebook for Educators: <http://facebookforeducators.org>

Facebook, privacy resources: <http://www.facebook.com/fbprivacy>

Policy STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California

[AR 1114 District Sponsored Social Media](#)

Definitions

Social media means any online platform for collaboration, interaction, and active participation, including, but not limited to, social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, or blogs.

Official district social media platform is a site authorized by the Superintendent or designee. Sites that have not been authorized by the Superintendent or designee but that contain content related to the district or comments on district operations, such as a site created by a parent-teacher organization, booster club, or other school-connected organization or a student's or employee's personal site, are not considered official district social media platforms.

(cf. [1230](#) - School-Connected Organizations)

(cf. [1260](#) - Educational Foundations)

Authorization for Official District Social Media Platforms

The Superintendent or designee shall authorize the development of any official district social media platform. Teachers and coaches shall obtain approval from the principal before creating an official classroom or team social media platform.

Guidelines for Content

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that official district social media platforms provide current information regarding district programs, activities, and operations, consistent with the goals and purposes of this policy and regulation. Official district social media platforms shall contain content that is appropriate for all audiences.

(cf. [0440](#) - District Technology Plan)

(cf. [0510](#) - School Accountability Report Card)

(cf. [1100](#) - Communication with the Public)

(cf. [1112](#) - Media Relations)

(cf. [1113](#) - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. 6020 - Parent Involvement)

(cf. 6145.5 - Student Organization and Equal Access)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that copyright laws are not violated in the use of material on official district social media platforms.

(cf. 4132/4232/4332 - Publication or Creation of Materials)

(cf. 6162.6 - Use of Copyrighted Materials)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that official district social media platforms are regularly monitored. Staff members responsible for monitoring content may remove posts based

on viewpoint-neutral considerations, such as lack of relation to the site's purpose or violation of the district's policy, regulation, or content guidelines.

Each official district social media platform shall prominently display:

1. The purpose of the site along with a statement that users are expected to use the site only for those intended purposes.
2. Information on how to use the security settings of the social media platform.
3. A statement that the site is regularly monitored and that any inappropriate post will be promptly removed. Inappropriate posts include those that:
 - a. Are obscene, libelous, or so incite students as to create a clear and present danger of the commission of unlawful acts on school premises, violation of school rules, or substantial disruption of the school's orderly operation
 - b. Are not related to the stated purpose of the site, including, but not limited to, comments of a commercial nature, political activity, and comments that constitute discrimination or harassment

(cf. [0410](#) - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
 (cf. [1160](#) - Political Processes)
 (cf. [1325](#) - Advertising and Promotion)
4. Protocols for users, including expectations that users will communicate in a respectful, courteous, and professional manner.
5. A statement that users are personally responsible for the content of their posts and that the district is not responsible for the content of external online platforms.
6. A disclaimer that the views and comments expressed on the site are those of the users and do not necessarily reflect the views of the district.
7. A disclaimer that any user's reference to a specific commercial product or service does not imply endorsement or recommendation of that product or service by the district.
8. The individual(s) to contact regarding violation of district guidelines on the use of official district social media platforms.

District employees who participate in official district social media platforms shall adhere to all applicable district policies and procedures, including, but not limited to, professional standards related to interactions with students.

(cf. 4040 - Employee Use of Technology)

(cf. 4119.21/4219.21/4319.21 - Professional Standards)

When appropriate, employees using official district social media platforms shall identify themselves by name and district title and include a disclaimer stating that the views and opinions expressed in their post are theirs alone and do not necessarily represent those of the district or school.

All staff shall receive information about appropriate use of the official district social media platforms.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4231 - Staff Development)

(cf. 4331 - Staff Development)

Regulation STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

approved: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California

BP 1115 Community Relations Communications & Rewards

To encourage community involvement in district programs and activities, the Board of Education may publicly recognize and commend parents/guardians, community members, businesses, and organizations that make outstanding contributions or provide longstanding service to the district or district students.

(cf. [1000](#) - Concepts and Roles)

(cf. [1240](#) - Volunteer Assistance)

(cf. [1700](#) - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools)

(cf. 3290 - Gifts, Grants and Bequests)

Any Board member, employee, parent/guardian, student, or community member may recommend an individual or organization for Board recognition. He/she shall submit to the Superintendent or designee the name of the individual or organization and a description of the outstanding contribution or service.

At the Board's discretion, the Board may present a letter of recognition, Board resolution, plaque, or other award at a public Board meeting or may hold a reception or informal recognition activity. The Board also may designate a day, week, or month for special recognition of volunteers.

The Board encourages similar forms of recognition for achievement or services as part of school-level commendation programs.

(cf. 4156.2/4256.2/4356.2 - Awards and Recognition)

(cf. 5126 - Awards for Achievement)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

35160 Authority of governing boards

35160.1 Broad authority of school districts

44015 Awards to employees and students

CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION

Article 16, Section 6 Gifts of public funds

Policy STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California

BP 1325 Community Relations Advertising & Promotions

The Board of Education establishes this policy to ensure effective and consistent standards for advertisements and promotions by nonschool groups in school-sponsored publications, on district and school web sites and social media, and on school facilities and grounds. Student speech shall be regulated in accordance with BP/AR 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression.

(cf. [1113](#) - District and School Web Sites)

(cf. [1114](#) - District-Sponsored Social Media)

(cf. [1330](#) - Use of School Facilities)

(cf. 5145.2 - Freedom of Speech/Expression)

(cf. 6145.5 - Student Organizations and Equal Access)

The Board desires to promote positive relationships between district schools and the community in order to enhance community partnerships, support, and involvement in the schools. The Superintendent or designee may, consistent with the criteria established in this policy, approve:

1. Distribution of noncommercial materials that publicize services, special events, public meetings, or other gatherings of interest to students or parents/guardians

(cf. [1400](#) - Relations Between Other Governmental Agencies and the Schools)

(cf. 6162.8 - Research)

2. Distribution of promotional materials of a commercial nature to students or parents/guardians

(cf. [1700](#) - Relations Between Private Industry and the Schools)

3. Paid advertisements on school property, including, but not limited to, advertisements on school buildings, athletic fields, scoreboards, and billboards

4. Paid advertisements in school-sponsored publications, yearbooks, announcements, and other school communications, including web sites and social media

5. Products and materials donated by commercial enterprises for educational use, including those that bear the name and/or logo of the donor, as long as they do not unduly promote the donor or any commercial activity or product

(cf. 3290 - Gifts, Grants and Bequests)

(cf. 6161.11 - Supplementary Instructional Materials)

Prior to the distribution, posting, or publishing of any nonschool group's promotional materials or advertisement, the Superintendent, principal, or designee shall review the materials or advertisement based on the criteria listed below. He/she may not disapprove materials or advertisement in an arbitrary or capricious manner or in a way that discriminates against a particular viewpoint on a subject that is otherwise allowed by Board policy.

All materials to be distributed shall bear the name and contact information of the sponsoring entity.

As necessary, the Superintendent, principal, or designee shall require a disclaimer on any nonschool group's promotional materials to be distributed, posted, or published, stating that the distribution, posting, or publishing of the materials does not imply district endorsement of the group's activities, products, or services. District- and school-sponsored publications shall include a disclaimer stating that the district or school does not endorse any advertised products or services.

Criteria for Approval

The Superintendent, principal, or designee shall not accept for distribution, or allow on school property, any materials or advertisements that:

1. Are lewd, obscene, libelous, or slanderous
2. Incite students to commit unlawful acts, violate school rules, or disrupt the orderly operation of the schools
3. Promote any particular political interest, candidate, party, or ballot measure, unless the candidates or advocates from all sides are provided the opportunity to present their views to the students during school hours or during events scheduled pursuant to the Civic Center Act (cf. [1160](#) - Political Processes)
(cf. 4119.25/4219.25/4319.25 - Political Activities of Employees)
4. Contain prayer or proselytizing language
5. Position the district on any side of a controversial issue
(cf. 6144 - Controversial Issues)
6. Discriminate against, attack, or denigrate any group on account of any unlawful consideration (cf. [0410](#) - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)
7. Promote the use or sale of materials or services that are illegal or inconsistent with school objectives, including, but not limited to, materials or advertisements for tobacco, intoxicants, and movies or products unsuitable for children
(cf. 5131.6 - Alcohol and Other Drugs)
(cf. 5131.62 - Tobacco)
8. Promote during the school day any food or beverage that does not comply with state nutritional standards pursuant to Education Code [49430-49434](#), including a corporate incentive program that offers free or discounted foods or beverages that do not meet nutritional standards as rewards for students who reach certain academic goals. This prohibition does not include advertising on clothing with brand images worn on school grounds, advertising contained in product packaging, or advertising of infrequent school fundraising events involving food or beverages that do not meet the nutritional standards. (Education Code [49431.9](#))
(cf. 3550 - Food Service/Child Nutrition Program)
(cf. 5030 - Student Wellness)
9. Solicit funds or services for an organization, with the exception of solicitations authorized in Board policy
(cf. [1321](#) - Solicitation of Funds from and by Students)

10. Distribute unsolicited merchandise for which an ensuing payment is requested

The Superintendent or designee may also consider the educational value of the materials or advertisements, the age or maturity of the students in the intended audience, and whether the materials or advertisements support the basic educational mission of the district, directly benefit the students, or are of intrinsic value to the students or their parents/guardians.

(cf. [0000](#) - Vision)

Schools may establish additional criteria pertaining to the content of advertisements in school publications and yearbooks, as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent or designee in accordance with law and Board policy.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

7050-7058 Political activities of school officers and employees

35160 Authority of governing boards

35160.1 Broad authority of school districts

35172 Promotional activities

38130-38139 Civic Center Act

49430-49434 The Pupil Nutrition, Health, and Achievement Act of 2001, especially:

49431.9 Advertisement of non-nutritious foods

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE

25664 Advertisements encouraging minors to drink

CALIFORNIA CONSTITUTION

Article 1, Section 2 Free speech rights

U.S. CONSTITUTION

Amendment 1, Freedom of speech and expression

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 42

1751-1769j School Lunch Program

1773 School Breakfast Program

COURT CASES

Hills v. Scottsdale Unified School District, (2003) 329 F.3d 1044

DiLoreto v. Downey Unified School District, (1999) 196 F.3d 958

Yeo v. Town of Lexington, (1997) 131 F.3d 241

Henry v. School Board of Colorado Springs, (D.Col. 1991) 760 F.Supp. 856

Bright v. Los Angeles Unified School District, (1976) 18 Cal. 3d 450

Lehman v. Shaker Heights, (1974) 418 U.S. 298

Management Resources:

WEB SITES

CSBA: <http://www.csba.org>

Policy STOCKTON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

adopted: January 8, 2019 Stockton, California